

CHARLEY

You a stockholder?

Leonora searches for a paper in her pocket.

LEONORA

~~Thanks for the compliment.~~ Do I look like a knocker? ~~or something?~~

~~She reacts to his puzzlement.~~

LEONORA

(cont)

~~You know. A big shot.~~ Me, I'm lucky I got two cents. I ~~just~~ read about them, ~~that's all.~~

She finds the news clip she wanted

LEONORA

(cont)

~~It's~~ in the Law Journal. Here!

CHARLEY

Thanks. I've read it.

LEONORA

~~It's a~~ interesting case, Consolidated is fighting to block ~~the~~ A Southwest takeover.

Industries

CHARLEY

So I understand.

A waste of time

LEONORA

~~They're wasting their time.~~ They can issue stock, use golden parachutes, raise the debt limit. The gang with the biggest bankroll takes the pot.

That's Southwest.

CHARLEY

~~In a manner of speaking, I suppose~~ *We'll see,* ~~that's true.~~

LEONORA

~~Not only that. It's a fact.~~

you'll see.

She studies him for a moment.

LEONORA

(cont)

Excuse me, I don't want to get personal but du macht ein guetter leben?

CHARLEY

A what?

LEONORA

still
~~Ah hah! I guessed.~~ You're not jewish *then?*
 but you are a lawyer. ~~was~~ I asked
 was you make a good living?

CHARLEY

I do okay.

LEONORA

for you.
 Good. Now what time's your case

CHARLEY

This afternoon. The senior partner and I have to meet with the judge first.

LEONORA

cast (disappointed)
 I ~~don't want to~~ waste my time.
 What's another ~~good trial?~~ No
 shysters okay? *prospect?*

She hands him a list.

LEONORA (cont)

Never mind how
 An important ~~case~~. Good arguments.

CHARLEY

~~Well, that's hard to say.~~ Do you have a special concern of any kind?

LEONORA

I'm ~~just~~ auditioning.

CHARLEY

You're what?

LEONORA

~~Auditioning. You know.~~ I'm looking for a *good*
 lawyer. So far, I'm not ~~very~~ impressed.
 I've been here a couple weeks. ~~Very~~ poor
 material around.

CHARLEY

There are some fine attorneys practicing here.

LEONORA

Can't / should
You ~~couldn't~~ tell ~~me~~ by me. The law schools ought to be ashamed ~~what's~~ *what they put* coming out. Oh, they know their torts and ~~their~~ contracts but they don't ~~really care about the law. They don't~~ *know from* think about the people.

(reminding herself)

Did I insult you?

CHARLEY

No. ~~That's all right.~~

LEONORA

It's a shame.
I don't want to get personal but you wouldn't mind telling me maybe how many years you're practicing?

CHARLEY

(becoming discomfited)

~~I'm~~ going on seven.

LEONORA

~~Only~~ Seven. That's ~~very~~ young. *Any* ~~don't suppose you've had much~~ experience with constitutional law.

CHARLEY

~~Depends on the case.~~ *A bit.*

He finally sees his rescuer as Ordway Gilbert, the managing partner of Charley's firm hurries up.

GILBERT

Charley, forgive me. My meeting ran late. Have we been called yet?

CHARLEY

No sir. ~~Your timing's perfect.~~

GILBERT

Good. Let's go.

As they start toward the courtroom doors..

LEONORA

Young man. ~~Just a~~ second.

One

Gilbert continues ~~to~~ but glances back at Charley.

LEONORA(cont)

You didn't give me your card.

CHARLEY

Forgive me, M'am...

Mrs. LEONORA

Bernstein. Leonora Bernstein.

CHARLEY

It's ~~really~~ unethical for me to solicit business.

LEONORA

You didn't solicit. I asked.

CHARLEY

Miss Bernstein..

LEONORA

Mrs. I'm a widow.

CHARLEY

I'm sorry. ~~Forgive me~~ But I don't think I can help you.

LEONORA *could be*

(a beat, then quietly)

Don't be surprised but mine is an ~~very~~ important case. ~~Maybe~~ *could be* a landmark. The Supreme Court ~~even,~~ *even,* ~~Washington, D.C.~~

GILBERT

(at the courtroom doors)

Charley.

Charley quickly removes a card from his pocket case, hands it to Leonora and starts for the courtroom.

LEONORA

I'll ~~try to~~ come by.

Charley hurries off. Leonora looks at the card, muses about it for a moment and then puts it in her bag.

INT. COURTROOM. DAY

A lawyer is questioning a surgeon.

MAUREEN

Charley..

CHARLEY

Please, Maureen. If I could help, I would. I just can't.

(to Leonora)

Of all the thousands of lawyers in New York, why'd you pick me?

LEONORA

(quietly)

I like you.

Charley softens at this but he still resists.

CHARLEY

That's a great way to pick a lawyer.

LEONORA

most advocates.
It's hard to like ~~a lot of people~~.
You...I felt something. A boy with promise. A real mensch. Someone who knows what the law is. A human profession.

CHARLEY

Mrs Bernstein, please.

LEONORA

Can be a real
~~It's a wonderful~~ satisfaction. A person comes in..anxious, troubled, often scared. The lawyer listens. And when they leave, they have a little ~~peace~~ *comfort.* They're going to be helped. That's the way it can be, ~~and should be~~ *the way it should be.*

CHARLEY

I'll get you Alex Hengle. You like him, don't you.

LEONORA

Finish
That nebbisch? How did he ~~get out of~~ law school?

CHARLEY

Okay. I'll get someone else.

MAUREEN

Charley knows a lot of people.

LEONORA

(quietly)

They bribed you.

CHARLEY

(unsure he has heard)

Who ~~and for what?~~

LEONORA

The partners. You were a prize, ~~to them~~.
A smart boy so they promised you the
world. A lot of money and someday, ~~a~~ *maybe* a
partnership. ~~only one~~ thing they didn't
tell you.

(slight beat)

You were giving up a decent way of life.

(to Maureen)

Thank you for the chinese ~~food~~. Very
tasty.

She goes to the door and Maureen hurries after her.

MAUREEN

Mrs Bernstein, please don't be angry.

LEONORA

No. Not angry. Disappointed. He's a nice
boy though. Hold on to him. You're a
~~very~~ nice girl. Good night.

She exits. Maureen returns to Charley who is turning on
the dishwasher, anxious to avoid her.

MAUREEN

You shit!

She exits to the bedroom and Charley ponders.

EXT. THE BANK. DAY

Leonora approaches with her shopping bag and enters.

INT. THE BANK

Leonora moves at her usual methodical pace as she makes
her way toward Mr Ames. She goes past the railing and
continues on as the secretary catches sight of her.